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# IN THE AIR

BY  
JOHN M. GILBERT



THE PENN PUBLISHING COMPANY  
PHILADELPHIA

# Successful Rural Plays

A Strong List From Which to Select Your  
Next Play

**FARM FOLKS.** A Rural Play in Four Acts, by ARTHUR LEWIS TUBBS. For five male and six female characters. Time of playing, two hours and a half. One simple exterior, two easy interior scenes. Costumes, modern. Flora Goodwin, a farmer's daughter, is engaged to Philip Burleigh, a young New Yorker. Philip's mother wants him to marry a society woman, and by falsehoods makes Flora believe Philip does not love her. Dave Weston, who wants Flora himself, helps the deception by intercepting a letter from Philip to Flora. She agrees to marry Dave, but on the eve of their marriage Dave confesses, Philip learns the truth, and he and Flora are reunited. It is a simple plot, but full of speeches and situations that sway an audience alternately to tears and to laughter.

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**THE PENN PUBLISHING COMPANY**  
**PHILADELPHIA**

# IN THE AIR

A Breezy Comedy in Three Acts

By

JOHN M. GILBERT

*Author of "The Day Express," etc.*



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**In the Air**

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# In the Air

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## CAST OF CHARACTERS

TOM ONTHEWING.....*A would-be aviator*  
ARCHIE THORPE.....*An inventor*  
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN BROWN.....*A country boy*  
DR. JOHN DEXTER.....*Of the Hospital Staff*  
PERKINS.....*A chauffeur*  
JIMMY JUMPER.....*A messenger boy*  
ANGELICA TERRAFIRMA.....*The Heiress*  
KATE CODDLINGTON.....*A nurse*  
MARY PETTIT.....*A nurse*  
ETHERIA LANE.....*A country girl with aspirations*

TIME OF PLAYING:—One hour and a half.

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## SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—Scene—Interior of a tent on the Aviation field.  
ACT II.—Scene—Ante-room in Hospital, the next day.  
ACT III.—Scene—Private room in Hospital, one week later.

## STORY OF THE PLAY

Tom Onthewing, a would-be aviator, is in love with Angelica Terrafirma, an heiress who does not care for flying. This difference of opinion keeps them apart. Tom has a fall in his plane and is sent to a hospital unconscious. Angelica, filled with remorse, hurries to the hospital to care for him. She induces Kate Coddington to yield her place to her, so that she may nurse him. Kate first instructs her what to tell the doctor and then leaves. Tom revives but does not recognize Angelica, because his head and eyes are completely covered with bandages. He thinks Angelica is the nurse, but tells her that her voice sounds strangely familiar. Doctor Dexter in the dim light of the invalid's room proposes to Angelica, thinking she is Kate, and during their conversation Tom realizes that she is Angelica. He sits up and tears the bandage from his eyes. All ends well.

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# In the Air

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## ACT I

SCENE.—*Interior of tent on aviation field—TOM and ARCHIE on stage. ARCHIE seated left with model of aeroplane in his hands. TOM standing.*

ARCHIE. You can easily see that this plane will surpass any at present in use. I tell you what, Tom, now I've set out to conquer the air I mean to do it thoroughly. Come on, share the triumph with me!

TOM. What can I do? If flying as a passenger will be of any use to you, you can depend on me. I'll fly! I'm willing enough to help you. I only wish you could invent something by which I could win Angelica.

ARCHIE. I've never thought much of controlling the airs of a beauty; it's easier to steer an aeroplane.

TOM. Don't joke, old man. You're fancy free so far.

ARCHIE. Well, I haven't come to wearing my heart on my sleeve. Cheer up, old fellow!

TOM (*taking model and studying it carefully*). How in the world do you ever plan such things? I could no more do it than——

ARCHIE (*interrupting*). "Than fly," you were going to say. Well, you can fly now, if you want to. (*As if an idea had suddenly occurred to him.*) I say! If an aeroplane can conquer the air, why wouldn't it be effective with an heiress, too? Why not ask her to fly with you?

TOM. You don't know Angelica. She hates the idea of leaving solid earth. No! It's useless to try to tempt her by flight.

ARCHIE. Not useless at all! Just the thing! You

insist on flying, and if she won't fly with you, she'll fly after you.

TOM. Not she! (*Puts model on table.*)

ARCHIE. Yes, she will. You have evidence of my inventive powers: let me tell you I've just invented a plan—an airy plan—which will win your heiress sure enough. Will you trust me?

TOM. Yes, I'll put myself in your hands. I'll do as you say. You may think it's just for the sake of Angelica's money, but I tell you that's not so. If you only knew her as I do!

ARCHIE. Better not! I might be tempted to use my new plan for myself. When will you begin to follow my directions?

TOM. No time like the present!

ARCHIE. Come with me then, and depend upon it the air will help you with the heiress!

(*Exeunt. Cheering in the distance. Enter ANGELICA, both hands at the back of her neck.*)

ANGELICA. Oh, how my neck aches! I've been looking up at the sky for hours, and I don't see why somebody doesn't invent something to make it easier to watch an aviator! Now it's no trouble to watch a baseball game. You can sit and look ahead of you and see the whole thing, but with flying machines it's different, and the grand stand isn't as comfortable as the bleachers. I wonder if it wouldn't make a hit to have one furnished with cots or hammocks, so you could look up without straining your neck so! Only then they'd have to take the roof off and it's usually the roof that makes the grand stand grand! Oh, my neck! And I do believe I'm sunburned under the chin. I've held it up at such an angle.

(*Takes small mirror from hand-bag. Enter TOM with cap and goggles.*)

TOM. Say, Angel, I've been looking all over for you. I couldn't go without saying good-bye.

ANGELICA (*studying mirror and using powder puff*).



Oh, Tom! Is that you? You've no idea how my neck aches; and I'm frightfully hungry! Do look up Perkins, and tell him to fetch the hamper!

TOM. I haven't time to eat anything now.

ANGELICA. Haven't time to eat! That's the first time I ever heard you say that. (*Still using powder.*) There! How does that look? (*Turns toward him, her head thrown back, showing neck and chin liberally powdered.*) Does it look very red?

TOM. Couldn't be whiter.

ANGELICA (*dropping head to natural level and for first time noticing TOM's goggles*). Gracious! How you do look! Is it easier to watch the flights with goggles on?

TOM. Haven't tried it. I put them on because I'm going up.

ANGELICA. Going up? Sounds like a man in an elevator. What do you keep on the third floor? Perhaps I'll find the restaurant there. Be a good boy, Tom, and find Perkins. I'm starving!

TOM. Why are your thoughts so fastened on the material facts of existence? How can you fail to be inspired by the progress of man's skill; by the achievements of man's genius? How can you cling to earth while the air is all about you and above you, and the conquest of its uncharted extent awaits you! How can you be unmoved by what you have seen to-day?

ANGELICA. I wasn't! It may sound contradictory but I was so moved that I remained rooted to one spot for hours. I've a stiff neck for proof. But I've an undeniable feeling that I can't live on air, and I must have Perkins and the hamper at once! Just drop your heroics, Tom, long enough to find them both, and then come back and we'll have a cosy lunch together.

TOM. But I'm all ready for a flight!

ANGELICA. Ready for flight! Then fly! Fly for Perkins! Fly for the hamper! Take the birds for your model and come back with a worm in your bill.

TOM. You are too provoking! Can't you see that I'm in earnest?

ANGELICA. Don't talk about being provoking. I'm only copying you. And as for being in earnest, you can't be more in earnest than I am. I demand the necessities of life; not that I love air less, but that I love food more—for the time being, at least. Fly, Tom, and make a record!

*(She draws him to rear, opens tent flap and pushes him out. Exit TOM.)*

ANGELICA *(again taking hand-mirror, and talking to her reflection in it)*. It's all I can do to keep my patience! Yet somehow I must manage to keep Tom on the ground. He used to be content with me, but now I've only a second place in his affections. Isn't it discouraging that a girl should be set aside for such rivals! There isn't one of these winged wonders that makes any claim to good looks, however graceful their movements may be, and Tom is devoted to them all.

*(Still using mirror, she begins song. Tune: "Quilting Party.")*

Often as my mirror tells me  
I must ask it yet again  
For it always answers very plainly  
"You are not so very plain."

Ref. You are not so very plain  
You are not so very plain  
Yes, it always answers very plainly  
"You are not so very plain."

I've been glad to hear its message  
But the joy has turned to pain;  
Modern lovers can't be held by beauty  
When they see an aeroplane!

*(Taking up model.)*

*Ref.* When they see an aeroplane, etc.

O just fancy what the wooing  
Of the coming days will be;  
"Be a monoplane no longer, darling,  
Be a biplane just with me!"

*Ref.* "Be a biplane just with me," etc.

*(Puts model on table.)*

*(Enter ARCHIE.)*

ARCHIE. I beg pardon. I was looking for Mr. On-the-wing.

ANGELICA. He has just gone in search of my man. He'll return directly.

ARCHIE. Is this Miss Terrafirma? I am Tom's old chum, Archie Thorpe.

ANGELICA. Oh, Mr. Thorpe, I'm very glad to meet you. Tom has spoken of you so often. Do sit down and wait for him, and then stay and have a bite with us. We are just about to have luncheon.

ARCHIE. Thank you so much, but it is almost time for my ascent.

ANGELICA. Are you really going into all that danger just for the excitement? Where is the fascination in it?

ARCHIE. Perhaps Tom could tell you better than I; he seems to have become enthusiastic lately.

ANGELICA. I should think he had, but I hope I can laugh him out of it. Won't you help me, Mr. Thorpe? Dwell on its dangers—how he can never accomplish anything by it—how there's nothing to win beyond a little empty applause.

ARCHIE. I'm afraid he expects to win more than that. But I must not wait. Very happy to have met you, Miss Terrafirma. Please tell Tom I'm sorry to have missed him.

*(Takes model and carries it out. Exit ARCHIE.)*

(Enter PERKINS, with large hamper. He opens folding table in center, spreads cloth, etc.)

ANGELICA. What have you brought, Perkins?

PERKINS. Only a plain luncheon, Miss Angelica. I've some cold birds —

ANGELICA (*interrupting*). Birds? Don't take them out! Don't talk about the food being plain! Everything conspires to suggest those tiresome machines and flying! Can't you get something heavy, Perkins? Something that holds you fast to earth—something with feet, but nothing with wings.

PERKINS (*astonished*). You told me, Miss, to put up a light luncheon!

ANGELICA. Well, I made a mistake. I want a heavy one, Perkins. Jump into the motor and hurry back to town and bring something that doesn't suggest flying—some terrapin, elephant steak, plum pudding—anything heavy and solid and substantial! Hurry! (PERKINS goes bewildered, leaving hamper half unpacked. ANGELICA seizes box containing birds and follows him, calling.) Perkins! Perkins! Take these birds with you!

(Exit ANGELICA. Enter ETHERIA and BENJAMIN. BENJAMIN has kite.)

BENJAMIN. Ain't this aviation great! I guess I've found my trade at last. I guess 'twasn't for nothin' I was named after one of the first men that made anything out of the air.

ETHERIA. What on earth do you mean, Ben?

BENJAMIN. Why, Ben Franklin. Don't you remember how he took to kite flyin'? I guess there is something more than electricity up there and if there is I'm bound to find it!

ETHERIA (*admiringly*). 'Course you will!

BENJAMIN. I'll fly a kite till I can get something that'll carry me up myself!

ETHERIA. Oh, Benny, you won't go alone, will you?

BENJAMIN. Who'd go with me, do you think?

IN THE AIR

ETHERIA. I know somebody who would.

BENJAMIN. Well, is he very big? 'Cause if he is he couldn't go. And is he very brave? 'Cause if he isn't he couldn't go.

ETHERIA. He isn't at all!

BENJAMIN. Isn't at all? What do you mean?

ETHERIA. I mean he isn't very big and he isn't very brave, and he isn't he, 'cause he's somebody else!

BENJAMIN. Oh, quit your foolin'! Who are you talkin' about, anyway?

ETHERIA (*coily*). Can't you guess?

BENJAMIN. I'm not good at guessin', and beside I've got to use all my brains to manage to get into the air myself. (*Sings—Tune "Michael Roy."*)

1.—I'll do as much as Ben Franklin did  
With his kite and string and key!  
And a lot of things that from him were hid,  
I fully intend to see!  
He never rode in an automobile,  
Nor ventured above this planet,  
Nor ever a wireless message sent,  
Though the spark on his key began it!

*Chorus.*—Hurrah! Hurrah! For every chap that  
flies!  
Hurrah, for the air that still gives a chance  
For a country boy to rise!

2.—I long indeed for the day to come  
When I proudly take my place  
Where the busy motors whir and hum  
While they carry me through space!  
With never a thought beneath the stars  
As they light up the milky way.  
I'll break the record from Earth to Mars  
When I celebrate that day!

(*Chorus as before.*)

ETHERIA (*weeping*). How can you be so unkind?

BENJAMIN. Unkind? Why, what did I say that hurt your feelings?

ETHERIA. You said—you said—you said you'd never have a thought for anything lower than the stars!

BENJAMIN. Well, what of it?

ETHERIA. Why, you'll forget me then!

BENJAMIN. Oh, nonsense! I'll never forget you! I couldn't, you know. (*Sees hamper.*) Look here! Now here's something worth while. Come! let's set the table.

(*As they are putting contents on table, enter TOM, still in goggles, etc.*)

TOM. Hello! Must be in the wrong tent!

BENJAMIN (*excitedly to ETHERIA*). He's the real thing! He's a flyer sure enough!

TOM. Beg pardon. I didn't mean to intrude. Evidently got into the wrong tent.

BENJAMIN. Don't go! Stay and have dinner with us!

TOM. Sorry, but I'm engaged elsewhere.

ETHERIA. Oh! Please stay! It'll be such a grand thing to talk to a real aviator.

TOM. So you're interested in flying?

ETHERIA. Ben is and I want to go with him.

(*All gather round the table. ANGELICA enters unseen—stands at door watching group.*)

TOM (*to ETHERIA*). You want to go! Well, you're a girl worth having! If Ben won't take you, what would you think of going up with me, just for a rise?

ETHERIA (*delightedly*). Would you really take me?

BENJAMIN. No, he wouldn't!

ANGELICA. No, he couldn't!

(*TOM startled. All turn to ANGELICA, rising quickly from table.*)

ANGELICA (*to TOM*). If these young people will excuse you, we'll have our luncheon, Tom! Perkins is bringing the hamper.

(*Enter PERKINS.*)

TOM (*aside*). Perkins and the hamper! The same old refrain. (*To ANGELICA.*) I beg your pardon, Angelica, but I have just asked this young lady to fly with me.

ANGELICA. Don't be ridiculous, Tom. You know you might as well ask her to die with you; and I'm sure you're not cruel enough to do that.

(*They retire to rear of stage, as if talking, and soon exeunt. PERKINS produces second table and proceeds to arrange it. ETHERIA and BENJAMIN slowly return to their table, glancing at PERKINS from time to time.*)

PERKINS. It's a heavy luncheon I've brought this time, and no mistake! I didn't even dare bring hard-boiled eggs for fear they might suggest chicken wings. But there's plenty of canned goods, and they do weigh most terrible. I even got the plum pudding in cans to make it heavier, and I got the baker to let me have some slack baked bread to make sure it would do. (*Goes on setting table.*) Certain it is that some people's whims and fancies do take a lot of time and money to satisfy. Those young folks seem to be enjoying the light stuff all right. Just look at the way that girl eats cream puffs!

BENJAMIN. I'm glad that meddlesome chap met his equal.

ETHERIA. Meddlesome chap! He's a gentleman born and bred! Anyone could see that, I should think. I should call the lady the meddlesome one.

BENJAMIN. Why should he ask you to fly with him? Now, if he'd asked me!

ETHERIA. I guess he thought you were too heavy.

BENJAMIN (*scornfully*). Too heavy! (*To PERKINS.*) Say, Mister, do you know the names of those people?

PERKINS (*stiffly*). The gentleman is Mr. Thomas Onthewing, and the lady is Miss Terrafirma, the great heiress.

BENJAMIN and ETHERIA. The heiress! Miss Terra-firma!

BENJAMIN. My! We're in society!

(Enter TOM and ANGELICA. BENJAMIN and ETHERIA gaze admiringly.)

ANGELICA. Now, Tom, do be sensible. Have a good lunch, a cigar, and then we'll watch the final events together.

(They seat themselves at table, waited on by PERKINS.)

TOM. Angelica, I know you mean well, but you can't seem to get my point of view.

ANGELICA. As that seems to be from the clouds I'm afraid I'll never reach it. Mine isn't quite so high.

TOM. Angelica, we have never differed before. Nothing ever came between us until this aeroplane—— (Rises from table.) Why can you not feel the contagion of this great impulse to rise above the commonplace?

(Sings—all joining in chorus—or song may be sung by all. Tune, "Dutch Warbler.")

- 1.—The ways of the world are too humdrum and slow,  
Its roads too dusty and dry!  
O why should a fellow be stubbing his toe,  
When it is so easy to fly?

*Chorus.*

O, Soar with me; Fly with me! Up in the air!  
Low with me; high with me; free from all care,  
With wings for the body, and wings for the wind,  
Let us leave trouble behind.

- 2.—Away thro' the air-lanes so lightly we'll pass,  
With stars like daisies abloom;  
With never a sign to keep off of the grass,  
And everywhere plenty of room. (*Chorus.*)



3.—O! Please do not wait till my reasons you've weighed,  
My heart too heavy will grow,  
'Tis only of weight that you need be afraid,  
So lightly decide that you'll go! (*Chorus.*)

ANGELICA. It's no use, Tom, I have inherited too much real estate to take care of, and I can't rise above it. You must be content to meet me on my own ground.

TOM. I'll meet you anywhere on earth, Angelica, but my aspirations include a bird's-eye view of all your real estate, and acres of it beside. Come with me just once, to enjoy that view together.

ANGELICA. No, Tom! (*Cheering heard outside.*)

TOM. I can't wait! It's time for the last flight!

(*TOM rushes from stage—followed by ETHERIA and BENJAMIN. ANGELICA sinks on chair at table, burying her face in her arms.*)

PERKINS. Wasn't the lunch heavy enough to hold him, Miss Angelica?

ANGELICA (*sobbing*). Oh! Perkins! I ought to have gone with him! My heart is heavy enough to keep him anchored forever! (*Weeps.*)

(*Chorus in distance—"O, Soar with me; Fly with me."*)

CURTAIN

## ACT II

SCENE.—*Ante-room in Hospital—the next day.*  
*Table in center—with large record book. Side table with bottles, etc. KATE seated at table making entries in record book. MARY at side table mixing medicine.*

KATE (*reads*). “Room 143, Mrs. Johnson, admitted August 26th. Physician in charge, Dr. Porter. Changed by request to Dr. Dexter.” That’s always the way. Nine cases out of ten want Dr. Dexter; nurses as well as patients.

MARY. Oh, I don’t know about that. Speak for yourself.

KATE. I’ll leave that for you, when he comes in.

MARY. Thank you! How’s the new case in No. 18?

KATE. As well as could be expected, poor soul.

(*Enter DR. DEXTER, breezily.*)

DOCTOR. Good-morning!

KATE and MARY. Good-morning, Dr. Dexter.

DOCTOR. Which of you is on that new surgical case? The aviator, I mean.

KATE. He’s mine!

DOCTOR (*laughing*). Oh, he’s yours! Well, keep a good hold on him! Don’t let him fly away from you; for he’s young and rich and handsome!

KATE. Not very handsome, now! but a fine young man, just the same. Can I do anything for you, Doctor?

DOCTOR. Thank you! I couldn’t bear to take you away from your interesting patient, but if Miss Pettit doesn’t mind a spin through the park in my car, I’ll get her to help me this morning. Can you go, Miss Pettit?

MARY. Of course, Doctor! Anywhere you wish.

DOCTOR. Get your hat, then, while I take a look at Miss Coddlington's special charge.

(Exit MARY and DOCTOR.)

KATE. I told Mary Pettit she could speak for herself and now she'll have a good chance.

(Bell rings. Enter JIMMY JUMPER with florist's box.)

JIMMY. For Mr. Onthewing!

KATE. Who shall I say they're from?

JIMMY. Card inside. (Presenting book.) Sign, please!

(KATE signs. Exit JIMMY.)

KATE (finding card in envelope tied to cord). My! "Dear Tom, with love from Margaret." Well, I don't know how soon he'll remember who Margaret is, for he hasn't noticed me at all. He had a nasty fall on his head, and he's certainly a sight with the bandages. I'll arrange these, and take them to his room.

(Opens box, takes a few flowers and puts in vase; as she does so, bell rings. Enter JIMMY with another box.)

JIMMY. For Mr. Thomas Onthewing.

KATE. Any name?

JIMMY. Card inside! Sign, please!

(KATE signs. Exit JIMMY. Enter MARY with hat and long coat over uniform.)

MARY. Has the Doctor come down yet?

KATE. No, dear. It's a lovely morning for your ride, and of course, with dear Dr. Dexter, it will be most enjoyable! (Laughs.)

MARY. You needn't act as if I'd planned it.

KATE. Oh, no! but then it was a very good plan to fall into, wasn't it?

MARY. Better than your aviator could propose. You'd be more apt to fall out if he asked you to ride with him.

"TAKE MY ADVICE"

(Tune—"Robin Adair.")

MARY *sings*—

Should he ask you to fly,  
Take my advice!  
Oh, make no rash reply,  
Take my advice!  
Light-hearted you may be—  
Only light-headed he—  
'Tis best go cautiously,  
Take my advice!

Better on earth to stay,  
Take my advice!  
Than rashly blow away,  
Take my advice!  
Man was not made for wings,  
Though to the thought he clings—  
Stick to substantial things!  
Take my advice!

(*Enter DOCTOR.*)

DOCTOR. Well, Miss Coddington, he's doing pretty well. Keep the bandages over his eyes. Love is always blind, you know. Ready, Miss Pettit? We'll start at once.

(*MARY and DOCTOR go out.*)

KATE. You might know Mary Pettit would get all the good times!

(*DOCTOR returns hurriedly.*)

DOCTOR. I forgot my gloves! Here they are. (*Picks up gauntlets from table.*) Forgive me, Miss Coddington. I'm sorry if I carried my joking too far, and I wish I might have given you a spin! Good-morning!

(*Exit DOCTOR.*)

KATE. He's certainly a dear man! I don't believe my damaged flyer can come up to him if he is young and rich. But I must get to work. (*Goes to stand and finds card on latest box. Reading card.*) "Love and sympathy from Louise." I suppose I must keep Margaret and Louise apart. They might not like it to be put together. I must get another jar or they may make one. (*Exit KATE. While absent, bell rings. Enter JIMMY with two boxes and plant. Stands waiting. Enter KATE with jar.*) How did you get in? Who are all those things for?

JIMMY. For Mr. Thomas Flyaway, or something of the sort. Sign, please!

KATE. Set them on that stand, won't you? (*KATE signs. Exit JIMMY.*) Well, the new patient is certainly popular. (*Reading cards.*) "Dear Mr. Onthewing, with the sincere regards of Mabel B——" "Tommy love, with oceans of affection from Nell." (*On plant.*) "Here's rosemary for remembrance. Lovingly, Sue." Sue's the wisest, for her offering can't be put in with any of the others. I'm sorry, Mabel and Nell, but as my supply of jars is limited, I'll have to double you up; and it won't make any difference to him, dear man, for the only word on his lips has been "Angel." That might apply to any one of them, though! I wonder which one it is, after all? Whether the angel is Margaret, or Louise, or Mabel, or Nell, or Sue? Or could he mean it for me? (*Sings.*)

"SOMETIMES"

(*Tune, "My Bonnie."*)

I never have dreamed much of flying,  
Nor cared to look down on mankind;  
Oh, never for wings I've been sighing,  
Nor for a balloon have I pined!

*Refrain*— Yet sometimes—sometimes—  
Sometimes I've thought and my thoughts have  
flown,  
Sometimes—Sometimes—  
I've thought I was rather alone!

I never have dreamed much of loving;  
I've never had time to rehearse,  
The language that lovers find moving,  
And sweet as a valentine's verse! (*Refrain.*)

I never have dreamed much of travel,  
Nor thought that the world I must see;  
Nor have I yet tried to unravel  
Why nobody comes to see me. (*Refrain.*)

(*Bell rings. Enter ETHERIA and BENJAMIN.*)

ETHERIA. Oh, isn't it awful to come to such a place?  
It makes me shiver, Benny.

BENJAMIN (*to KATE*). We have a friend who has  
been brought here. We've called to see him,  
ma'am.

KATE. What is the name, please?

BENJAMIN. Benjamin Franklin Brown.

KATE (*searching record book*). Brown! Brown! Is  
it Mrs. Jeremiah Brown or Samuel Alexander  
Brown?

BENJAMIN. Neither of those—just Benjamin F.  
Brown.

KATE. I'm sorry, but he isn't here.

ETHERIA. Oh, yes, he's here!

KATE (*haughtily*). I think I know who is in the hos-  
pital.

BENJAMIN. Well, ma'am, you don't know me, for  
I'm B. F. Brown, all right.

KATE. I thought you said you wanted to see Mr.  
Brown. Who is your friend?

BENJAMIN (*promptly introducing ETHERIA*). My  
friend, Miss Etheria Lane.

*IN THE AIR*

---

KATE. Glad to meet you, Miss Lane, but who is the friend you expected to find here?

ETHERIA. Oh, he's a real aviator, you know, and I came very near going up with him.

BENJAMIN. You'd just as well say you came near coming down with him. (*To KATE.*) We want to see Mr. Onthewing.

KATE. I'm sorry to say no one is permitted to see him this morning. (*Bell rings.*) Excuse me, there's his bell now!

(*Exit KATE.*)

ETHERIA. Benny, you're real cross to-day. You snapped me up terribly before that nurse!

BENJAMIN. Anyhow, I'm sure I told the truth. You were about as near to coming down with him as you were to going up. You needn't call me cross, Etheria. If it wasn't for me, you'd be lying on a cot in this hospital this minute!

ETHERIA. Oh!

BENJAMIN. Lying with your legs broken!

ETHERIA. Oh!

BENJAMIN. And your arms broken!

ETHERIA. Oh!

BENJAMIN. And your nose broken!

ETHERIA. Oh! Oh!

BENJAMIN. And your neck broken!

ETHERIA. Oh! Oh! Oh! I think you're perfectly dreadful, Benjamin Brown, and I'm not going to stay another minute!

(*ETHERIA runs off. Enter KATE.*)

KATE. Has Miss Lane gone? I'm sorry you can't see Mr. Onthewing, but he's so bandaged that it would be no comfort to you.

BENJAMIN. I'm sorry, too. I would so like to see all sides of the aviation question. I'd like to study all the results. There's one thing about being poor—if you can't get the thrills out of a kite that you

can out of an aeroplane, the kite can't break you into as many pieces.

(*Exit BENJAMIN. Enter JIMMY with suit-case.*)

KATE. Who is that for?

JIMMY. Name on tag. Sign, please!

KATE (*signing*). I wonder what's in this? (*Exit*

JIMMY. KATE *reads tag.*) "Miss A. Terrafirma."

Must be some mistake. No patient of that name. Why, it must belong to the heiress who lives in the big house on the Square. I wonder if I ought to open it, in case there is any explanation inside? (*Handles lock.*)

(*Enter ANGELICA.*)

ANGELICA. Good-morning! So my luggage has come!

KATE. Good-morning! Are you Miss Terrafirma?

ANGELICA. I am.

KATE. Have you engaged your room? What operation do you expect?

ANGELICA. I hope none will be necessary!

KATE. Aren't you coming for an operation?

ANGELICA. Oh, dear me, no!

KATE. Perhaps you wish to take the rest cure?

ANGELICA. Scarcely that. To tell the truth, I wish to become a nurse.

KATE. A nurse! Have you been admitted by the examining board?

ANGELICA. Indeed not; and I don't intend to be. That's what I want to avoid. Would you kindly tell me your name?

KATE. I am Kate Coddlington.

ANGELICA. Well, Miss Coddlington, I hope we shall be friends. I have a little matter I should like to talk over with you.

(*Bell rings. Enter JIMMY, with box tied up in white paper and ribbons.*)

JIMMY. Another for that Onthewing fellow. Sign, please!

KATE (*signs. Exit JIMMY*). My! this is a dainty one,



and written on the outside: "Dearest Tom, from Eleanor."

ANGELICA. I beg pardon. Has Mr. Onthewing received many such boxes?

KATE. Just what you see there, Miss Terrafirma. (*Points to side table.*) Do you happen to know him?

(*Bell rings. Enter JIMMY. While KATE attends to his wants, ANGELICA steps to stand and reads cards on various boxes. Enter ARCHIE; ANGELICA recognizes him rather coldly, and they remain as if conversing.*)

JIMMY. 'Tisn't a box this time! It's a note; and I was to say particularly that it was to go in the box of flowers which was sent this morning. (*Winking at KATE.*) I told her you'd be sure to get it in, as probably there wasn't but one box! Oh, my! (*JIMMY and KATE laugh heartily. JIMMY, suddenly serious.*) Sign, please!

(*KATE signs. Exit JIMMY, followed by KATE with box. ARCHIE and ANGELICA coming forward.*)

ARCHIE. I am sorry you feel I am so much to blame for Tom's accident.

ANGELICA. I am sure I don't see how I could feel otherwise. If it had not been for you, he would never have become so infatuated with the air —

ARCHIE. But, really, his infatuation wasn't so much for the air —

ANGELICA (*interrupting*). Not for the air? Well, for the aeroplane, then!

ARCHIE. My dear young lady, believe me, the aeroplane was only the means to an end.

ANGELICA. It reached the end very rapidly, for it soon brought poor Tom out of the clouds and landed him on hard ground.

ARCHIE. Excuse me, I must not linger, but, believe me, Tom only ventured into the air in order to win Terrafirma more rapidly!

(*ARCHIE hurries off. Enter KATE.*)

ANGELICA. Such rudeness cannot be borne. How disgusting to joke at such a time!

KATE. You were saying that you wanted to talk with me.

ANGELICA. Indeed I do! Can't we sit down? (*Both seat themselves.*) To begin with, I must tell you that I know Mr. Onthewing very intimately. Indeed, I am practically engaged to him, and I am determined to take care of him. That is why I said I wish to become a nurse. I must nurse him, and I want you to help me!

KATE. You must nurse him? How romantic! Then you want me to give up the case? That would be very unprofessional, I am sure.

ANGELICA. Just listen to my plan. I am sure you would love to run down to Atlantic City, or Cape May, or some of those places, for a week or ten days; wouldn't you? It would do you so much good! It would be such a rest and change!

KATE. Oh, those vacation trips cost too much.

ANGELICA. Don't speak of cost! I'll attend to all that! It shan't cost you a cent! All I want you to do is to go! But first I want you to let me have some of your uniforms, and in exchange you will find at my home a number of gowns you can use on your trip. Of course you can't go to-day! You must tell me just what I'm to do, first; just what I'm to say to the Doctor, and all that.

(ANGELICA sings. Tune—"Mush-mush," without refrain.)

### THE ANT AND THE BUTTERFLY

'Twas an Ant who'd known toil and vexation  
Who had always had more work to do,  
And she needed a little vacation—

May I tell you the "Ant" stands for you?  
Oh, a change from the ant-hill she needed,  
Relief from the duties that pressed;  
So her friend's wiser counsel she heeded,  
And decided she would take a rest!

KATE (*sings*)—

'Twas a Butterfly who had sipped honey,  
Who came to the Ant one fine day,  
And she offered her wings and her money—  
You know who she is, I dare say!  
And the Ant felt like young Cinderella,  
Her wants by a fairy supplied;  
'Twould take little persuasion to tell her  
That the Butterfly's plan must be tried!

KATE and ANGELICA (*sing*)—

'Twas for wings that the Ant had been yearning,  
Though she never had known it till then;  
And she feels as their use she is learning,  
That she'll ne'er do without them again!  
And the Butterfly's wooing a duty  
Where wings only get in the way:  
She'll no longer rely on mere beauty,  
For work is best mingled with play.

KATE. But the Superintendent will never consent.

ANGELICA. Oh, bother! Never mind the Superintendent! I simply change places with you. I become Miss Coddington, of the Hospital, and you become for a week Miss Terrafirma. Here's a check for five hundred to see you through (*hands check*), and the gowns are ready, with my maid waiting to help you try them on. There's one "dream" of a white lace over pale blue, that will just suit you.

KATE. We're about the same size, I think. (*Measuring ANGELICA with apron.*) But suppose it were discovered! If the Superintendent or the Doctor should find out I had left my work——!

ANGELICA. Oh, I'll settle the bill somehow! There's the sweetest dancing frock, corn color with pearl embroidery, in which you'll look like an angel!

KATE. Like an angel! That's what Mr. Onthewing has been calling me. It is always "Angel" this, and "Angel" that!

ANGELICA. Oh, he thought you were me! That's my name, you know, Angelica; and he always shortens it to Angel. All the better if he thinks I am with him. (*Aside.*) But how could he make such a mistake? (*To KATE.*) Is he delirious all the time?

KATE. Not at all. But he's blindfolded, because it's the only way to keep the bandages on his head.

ANGELICA. Well, will you be ready to start to-night? Let's go to your room. I can get into a uniform of yours, and you can begin instructions.

KATE. Perhaps Mary Pettit won't have all the good times after all. I can't make up my mind. Did you say the corn color dress was silk or satin?

ANGELICA. Crepe de chine. I hear a man's step in the hall. Come, Miss Coddington, there isn't a minute to lose.

(ANGELICA puts her arm in KATE'S, takes suit-case.  
Both exeunt. Enter DR. DEXTER.)

DOCTOR. I thought I heard Kate Coddington's voice! (*Listens at door.*) She's certainly not far away. (*Calls.*) Miss Coddington! Miss Coddington!

KATE (*outside*). Who is it? I can't come just now. I am engaged.

DOCTOR. Doctor Dexter wants to see you a moment when you are at liberty. (*DOCTOR seats himself and takes up newspaper.*) It is a mystery to me why these fellows must be so venturesome. And yet, after all, there's compensation in coming down so suddenly, if you can fall into the hands of a nurse like Kate.

(Enter KATE.)

KATE. Why, Doctor, I thought you were at the other end of the park!

DOCTOR. No, I sent Miss Pettit over in my car to look after a nervous old lady. She's mixed up in this aviation accident, too. It seems her son, Archie Thorpe, owned the wrecked machine; and

when she heard it had dropped, she took it for granted that Archie was in it and promptly went into hysterics, refusing to listen to any explanations.

KATE. How unfortunate!

DOCTOR. I thought Miss Pettit might calm her down after a while and persuade her that her son had not tried that particular flight. And I told Archie to turn up at home, so Miss Pettit could produce him, in proof of her story.

KATE. How much trouble is caused by these new inventions!

DOCTOR. Yes. They have a useful side, too, though some of the worst dangers are hidden.

KATE. Why, what do you mean?

DOCTOR. Ah, Miss Coddington, it isn't only the one who drops from the clouds who is hurt! Even you might be involved without leaving the hospital.

KATE. I! How!

DOCTOR. I only want to warn you. Aviators may not be least dangerous when bandaged and blindfolded.

KATE. Oh, my patient has never been delirious, not at all violent.

DOCTOR. I scarcely like to trust you with him, nevertheless. You mustn't get too interested in him, Kate.

KATE. Dr. Dexter! You forget yourself. Nothing would induce me to be so unprofessional! (*Bell rings.*) There, he's ringing now!

DOCTOR. It would be unprofessional to keep you from your duty! (*DOCTOR bows as KATE exits.*) Every time I try to speak to her I am balked in some way.

(*Bell rings. Enter JIMMY with telegram.*)

JIMMY. For Dr. John Dexter. Sign, please.

(*DOCTOR tears open envelope and reads message.*)

IN THE AIR

DOCTOR. Well, this means I shan't see Kate again for a week. Too bad I'm called to Chicago just at this minute!

JIMMY. Sign, please!

DOCTOR (*ignoring JIMMY*). When I come back I'll try it differently. Perhaps the aviator may help me without being aware of it. I'll leave orders to keep him in the dark, with his eyes bandaged till I get back!

JIMMY (*impatiently*). Sign, please!

(DOCTOR *signs as curtain falls.*)

CURTAIN

### ACT III

SCENE.—*Private room in hospital a week later.*  
*TOM on cot, head and eyes bandaged. ANGELICA, as nurse, bringing in tray, which she sets on table beside cot.*

ANGELICA. I've brought you some nice, hot soup, Mr. Onthewing, and a little toast. And when you've been very good and eaten this all up, I'll bring you some ice-cream.

TOM. You are very kind. You remind me so much of a dear friend of mine. She's the sweetest girl in the world, too.

ANGELICA. I'm glad I remind you of something pleasant.

TOM. The point in which you are most like her is that you are so often urging me to eat something!

ANGELICA. Yes? But you must eat to keep up your strength. (*Feeds him with spoonfuls of soup.*) Now I've a cheerful surprise for you. After you've had a nap, when the doctor comes in, you're to take the bandage from your eyes. I wonder what you'll see first? And I'm sure it will look strange to you, after being blindfolded for a week!

TOM. I shall be glad to see you. There is something curiously familiar about your voice, and I feel as if I had known you a long time. But really, the first person I should like best to see is Miss Angelica Terrafirma.

ANGELICA. Perhaps we can arrange even that, if you try not to get too much excited beforehand.

If you do, your eyes may be affected and you may not be able to see straight. Is that enough soup?

TOM. Enough, and to spare! Now, I suppose I must take the nap you spoke of. You need not trouble about the ice-cream this time. I'll look forward to a glimpse of Angelica for dessert.

(*Settles himself on pillow and gradually falls asleep.*  
ANGELICA *pulls down shade, darkening stage somewhat.* Enter MARY.)

MARY. Oh, Kate, I've come back, and so much has happened!

ANGELICA (*pointing to cot*). Hush! Hush! He's just dropping off!

MARY. Oh, when will you be free? I simply can't wait! I've only a few minutes to be away. The old lady was asleep and Mr. Thorpe brought me over in his motor. You know he's sold his aeroplane and bought a touring car, because I said whatever happened I should never dare to fly.

ANGELICA. Whatever happened? Why, what did you expect to happen?

MARY (*in some confusion*). Oh, I meant in any emergency—if we had to send for a doctor—or needed oxygen—or anything of that sort.

ANGELICA. I should think an aeroplane would be just the thing to send for oxygen! But we mustn't talk here. I'll step into the corridor with you.

(*They go out.* Enter ARCHIE.)

ARCHIE. Miss Pettit! Miss Pettit! Mary! I think we must be starting! My! here I am bursting into poor Tom's room because I'd forgotten everything except—well, except my hurry! (*Goes to cot.*) Fortunate thing the old chap is such a sound sleeper. I'd hate to waken him. But how he will chaff me about selling my aeroplane! I'll make him think his fall frightened me into it. I'll never tell him a girl's whim had anything to



do with it. Good-bye, old boy! Have a good nap!

(Exit ARCHIE. Enter ANGELICA.)

ANGELICA. How queerly that nurse looked at me. She must have thought I was losing my senses by the way she said: "Why, Kate, you can't have forgotten our talks, and yet you look at me as if you didn't even know who I am. Are you sick?" It was a good thing the corridor was so dark and that Archie Thorpe came along and claimed her complete attention. (*A knock.*) Come in! (*Enter DR. DEXTER.*) Good-afternoon, Doctor. I did not know you had returned.

DOCTOR. I am so glad to find you here, Miss Coddlington. I wanted to consult you about removing your patient's bandages. Dr. Porter said he had suggested it. (*Goes toward cot.*)

ANGELICA. But Mr. Onthewing is sound asleep, and I think we had better not startle him by any sudden wakening.

DOCTOR. You are right, as usual. We will not rouse him. But I am glad to find you here. There's another matter about which I would like your help—yes—your encouragement. I was called away suddenly a week ago, and I never had a chance to finish what I had begun to say to you.

ANGELICA (*aside*). What had I better take it for granted he was talking about? (*To DOCTOR.*) Certainly, with pleasure.

DOCTOR. You are good to be so cordial.

ANGELICA. I only hope you were not going to discuss any aeronautical problems. They are too distressing when one is face to face with results. What good can ever come to anyone by trying to fly, and then falling flat among broken blades and twisted machinery? As long as you leave out the air I shall be glad to talk with you.

DOCTOR. But, Kate, suppose I should talk of flight?

ANGELICA. No. I refuse to talk of flight, but I may take refuge in it, if you are not careful.

DOCTOR (*sings, gradually approaching ANGELICA, mistaking her still for KATE.*)

“THE FLIGHT OF TIME”

(*Tune—“Old Oaken Bucket”*)

Oh, talk not of flight, as if flying would scare you,  
There's nothing so strange in my flying machine!  
The aeroplane, monoplane, biplane, I spare you;  
Just sit by my side, and you'll see what I mean.  
I am taking a flight, and I want you to steer me,  
Oh, don't draw away, and pretend you're afraid!  
There's nothing to fear, if you only keep near me;  
The car is the safest that ever was made!

*Refrain*

The car is the safest, the surest, the strongest,  
The flight is the longest that ever was made!

Don't start when I tell you already we've started,  
We're far on our way, and the crowd's left behind.  
From all but ourselves we are sundered and parted;  
I need no one else, and I hope you don't mind!  
There's surely no danger unless you upset me.  
Sit quiet and close, till I finish my rhyme;  
I'm longing to take you, if only you'll let me,  
To share with me always the swift flight of time!

*Refrain*

The flight that is safest and surest and fleetest!  
'Tis yours to make sweetest the swift flight of time.

(ANGELICA *tries to draw away. At close of first stanza TOM rouses, sits up quietly, turning to DOCTOR and ANGELICA. Fumbles with bandage and at last pulls it off. Stares, rubbing eyes. As DOCTOR ends TOM jumps up, clad in long bath-robe, left arm in sling, etc.*)

TOM. Angelica! (*ANGELICA and DOCTOR turn toward him, startled.*) Angelica! You here?

ANGELICA. Tom! Tom, be calm—be quiet! You'll harm yourself.

DOCTOR. Mr. Onthewing, you are laboring under a delusion!

ANGELICA. No! Dr. Dexter, the delusion is yours! I am not Miss Coddlington as you suppose.

(*ANGELICA goes to window and raises shade.*)

DOCTOR. Heavens! Not Miss Coddlington! How can that be? I was told she still had charge of this case!

TOM. I can't understand it, Angel! Though you said things might look strange to me at first—and they certainly do!

ANGELICA. Lie down again, Tom, and I'll try to explain to you and the Doctor together.

(*ANGELICA goes to help TOM. KATE enters suddenly in street dress.*)

KATE. Is the Doctor taking you to task, dear Miss Terrafirma? Let me explain and take all the blame!

DOCTOR. Kate! What has happened?

KATE. Have you only just gotten your eyes open?

TOM. I guess that's it!

ANGELICA. Dr. Dexter has been away for a week.

KATE. Away for a week? So he has only just discovered my absence?

DOCTOR. Have you been away, too? Then you have received none of my letters?

KATE. Letters! No! I never received any!

ANGELICA (*who has been settling TOM on cot, takes package from pocket*). They are safe here. Perhaps you had better read them elsewhere while I quiet my patient. The Doctor may need some soothing, too. And I have a story to tell Mr. Onthewing that may divert him a little.

(*KATE and DOCTOR exeunt together.*)

TOM. Oh, Angel! And it is you who have been with me all this time!

ANGELICA. Yes, Tom, and weren't you stupid enough not to find it out before!

TOM. But that Doctor! What right has he to talk in that way to you? How dare he ask you to steer his flight for him? And if you think so much of him, why are you taking care of me? Is it just so you can see more of him?

ANGELICA. Why, I never laid eyes on him before. I only knew his name because I'd been told he was coming back to-day after a week's vacation.

TOM. But why are you here in that dress?

ANGELICA. Well, you see, Miss Coddlington needed a rest, and I thought I might act as her substitute for a few days.

TOM. Why, what do you know about nursing?

ANGELICA. That's a nice question. When I've been taking care of you for a week!

TOM. Forgive me, Angelica, but I can't help feeling confused. I last saw you on the aviation field. I left you to make the flight I'd set my heart on. I must have been flying in a circle, because I've brought up beside you again.

(*A knock. Enter* ETHERIA *and* BENJAMIN.)

BENJAMIN. We were told Mr. Onthewing could receive visitors this afternoon.

ETHERIA. You know, I came very near going up with you, or as Benny says I ought to say, I came just as near coming down with you.

TOM. Oh, you're the young people who were in the tent eating lunch? It's very kind of you to come in. I'm glad to see you, but I'm not much to look at, myself.

BENJAMIN. Oh, yes, you are. I'm studying aviation, you know, and I want to understand it from beginning to end.

ETHERIA. I'm studying, too; so we can be together.

ANGELICA. In what part are you especially interested?

ETHERIA. I'm thinking and planning how a woman can dress so she won't look blown to pieces when she lands. You see the landing may be sudden, so she has no chance to fix herself at all, and it's a pretty serious matter to know what she'd better wear.

ANGELICA. I should think so!

"WHAT TO WEAR"

(Tune—"Bonnie Doon.")

ETHERIA *sings*—

If when one flew she always went  
Straight up and on, quite free from care!  
If flight were just a plain ascent,  
She might discover what to wear!

*Refrain*

Oh, first it's up, then sideways, so—  
You may turn round—or over—next!  
Yet soon or late you downward go—  
No wonder that one feels perplexed!

Oh, winds are strong, and skirts will flap,  
In spite of tailor's well-used skill;  
And hair will slip from snuggest cap,  
And straggle, wisp-like, at its will!

(*Refrain as before.*)

BENJAMIN. As I was saying, I'm trying to be thorough. I want to go from beginning to end, and I thought when you came to grief, I'd a pretty good chance to finish my education. Taking Ben Franklin as a beginning, I thought I'd come to an end when you fell down; but you don't seem to have ended yet, so I'll just have to call it one more chapter, and write underneath: "To be concluded."

TOM. It would be more cheerful to say: "To be continued." Good-bye to you both. Come in again.

ETHERIA. }  
BENJAMIN. } Good-bye! (*Exeunt.*)

TOM. I can't help returning to the old question, why and how are you here, Angelica?

ANGELICA. Dear me! I don't know that there is anything so remarkable about my trying to be useful once in a while.

TOM (*sits up*). I want you to tell me the real reason, because it makes all the difference in the world how you answer it.

ANGELICA. Is it such a serious matter?

TOM. It is serious.

ANGELICA. I can't tell you, Tom. You'll have to guess it.

TOM. Then I'll not ask you, Angelica; but I will ask you to sing to me, and perhaps by the time you've finished the song, I'll have finished guessing.

ANGELICA. There's a guitar in Miss Coddington's room. I'll get it.

(*Exit ANGELICA. TOM lies back, closes eyes. Enter PERKINS.*)

PERKINS. Is Miss Terrafirma here, sir?

TOM (*opening eyes*). Oh, Perkins, is that you? I wonder if you've brought a hamper this time?

PERKINS. No, sir. No hamper. I came to get Miss Angelica's luggage.

TOM. Why, where's she going?

PERKINS. Going home, sir!

TOM. Oh pshaw! She isn't going to leave me alone here, is she?

PERKINS. All I know, sir, is that I had orders to come for her luggage this afternoon. And cook had orders for a special dinner, to-night. And Miss Angelica's mother, she's expecting a gentleman visitor who's been sick. So I guess those things all fit together.

TOM. Well, Perkins, I hope they do, but I don't quite see it.

(*Enter ANGELICA with guitar.*)

ANGELICA. You here, Perkins, so soon?

PERKINS. Yes, Miss Angelica, I've come for your luggage.

ANGELICA. I'm sorry it isn't quite ready. Just go down to the reception room for a while, and I'll ring when I need you.

(Exit PERKINS.)

TOM. You're not going to leave me alone, Angelica, just as I've realized you're here?

ANGELICA. Don't you worry, Tom. Rest comfortably while I sing.

(*She pulls afghan over his feet. Then takes up guitar and sings.*)

"LOVE AND TIME"

(Tune—"Auld Lang Syne.")

Ere aviation was in vogue  
And none but birds could fly  
Love bought a pair of wings, the rogue,  
And thought a flight he'd try.  
He darted here—he darted there—  
From heart to heart he flew!  
The fascination of the air  
Was something strange and new.

Then Father Time soon fixed in place  
A pair of wings, as well;  
And when with Love he'd sometimes race  
Most wondrous things befell.  
When Time would win, one could but see  
Poor Love was left behind!  
How sad to think that this could be,  
Or Time prove so unkind!

"I'll race no more," said Love one day,  
"Nor risk these sudden spills;  
It isn't fair that men should pay  
My aviation bills!

I'd rather be more sure of things  
Than have a bird's eye view!"  
And so, he's folded up his wings  
And come to stay with you!

(Enter ARCHIE and MARY in high spirits.)

ARCHIE. What was that last line I heard, about staying with you, Tom? Hello, old fellow! Good-afternoon, Miss Terrafirma! May I introduce a gift from the air—Miss Mary Pettit!

ANGELICA (*crossing to MARY, shaking hands cordially*). I think we have met before, though under a slight misapprehension.

TOM. A gift from the air? How's that, Archie?

ARCHIE. If it hadn't been for the aeroplane and your fall and my mother's fright because she thought it was I who had dropped; if it hadn't been for this attempted conquest of the air, I'd never have fallen heir to Miss Pettit's heart and hand! So you see, Miss Terrafirma, I've won a good deal more than "empty applause."

(Laughs, bowing to ANGELICA.)

TOM. Congratulations, old chap! And I—I've won all I'd hoped, and more. But I can't tell you all about it just yet.

ANGELICA (*to MARY*). Have you seen Miss Coddlington yet?

MARY. Not here, but I thought Dr. Dexter's car passed us in the park, and he seemed to be taking her to a new case.

TOM. I'll wager that he's the patient then!

(During the following conversation PERKINS appears at door. ANGELICA speaks with him and PERKINS shortly disappears again. Knock, enter DOCTOR and KATE.)

MARY (*running to KATE, embracing her*). Oh, Kate! You can't imagine what has happened!



KATE. I can! but you can't! I caught a glimpse of you both in the park.

DOCTOR. Mr. Onthewing, I hope this excitement is not too much for you?

TOM. I can stand it, Doctor, if you can. From your beaming smile, I am sure you, too, are to be congratulated.

*(DOCTOR goes to cot. They shake hands warmly.)*

DOCTOR. Yes, I'm thoroughly in favor of aviation.

KATE. So am I!

DOCTOR. If it hadn't been for that aeroplane and its intercepted flight, I should not have found the way to win a certain thing I was longing for!

*(Enter with a rush, BENJAMIN and ETHERIA.)*

BENJAMIN. Say, Mr. Onthewing, I'm going to write "to be continued," after all! For Mr. Thorpe has engaged me to help him with his latest machine, which he's building to make a new record. He's bound to conquer the air, and Etheria and I will back him up in it!

TOM. Good for you, Benjamin!

ETHERIA. And I'll have a chance to go up with him, as soon as I've finished the model for a lady-aviator's costume.

TOM. Angelica, can't we call Perkins, and ask him to fetch a hamper? Seems to me there was never a more propitious moment for his appearance.

ANGELICA. Are you really hungry at last?

TOM. Only for another sight of you. But some wedding cake and ice-cream would be appropriate and acceptable to all the others, I am sure.

ANGELICA. Your eye has been so long trained for a bird's eye view, that I'm astonished you haven't already seen Perkins coming.

*(Enter PERKINS with hamper.)*

PERKINS. The hamper's a bit heavy, Miss Angelica.

*(Enter JIMMY, with large, long box.)*

JIMMY. Package for Mr. Onthewing. Sign, please!

ANGELICA. You may unpack the hamper, Perkins.  
Wedding cake usually is heavy. It's meant to  
celebrate anchorage in a safe harbor.

TOM. We're glad to be anchored, Angelica, but don't  
forget all that the air has done for us—how much  
it has given us!

JIMMY. Package for Mr. Onthewing. Sign, please!

ANGELICA. Tom, if that is another box of flowers,  
you'll certainly have to explain why you have so  
many devoted girl friends.

TOM. Then I'll just quote that first verse you sang  
for me a while ago, about Love trying his wings:

“He darted here—he darted there—  
From heart to heart he flew!  
The fascination of the air  
Was something strange and new.”

ANGELICA. That may be very well to account for the  
past, but how about the future?

TOM. I'll have to use another verse for that: “For  
Love has folded up his wings; And come to stay  
with you!” But I don't believe this is flowers.

*(Opens box and takes out model of aeroplane, which  
he holds up. All exclaim “What a beauty! Isn't  
that fine!” etc.)*

ARCHIE. Perhaps I'd better explain a little. This is  
the model of my latest and most improved aero-  
plane. Since I owe so much to Tom and his great  
flight ——

ALL *(interrupting)*. So do we! So do we!

ARCHIE. Since we all owe so much to Tom, I have  
decided to call this the “Onthewing Model!”

ALL. Hurrah! Hurrah! Good for you!

ARCHIE. Especially as I have succeeded in perfect-  
ing a new landing device, which cannot fail to  
bring the conqueror of the air safely and surely  
to Terrafirma!

(*All sing. Tune—"There is a Tavern in Our Town."*)

"THE CASTLE IN THE AIR"

1—In this new plane who would not fly, on the wing,  
None other carries one so high, on the wing!  
And none so safely lands at last,  
In spite of every baffling blast!

*Chorus*

Oh, since Love his flight attempted  
None from flying is exempted,  
Yet there always will be some who don't know how  
to steer,  
Don't blame the rest, if these incompetent appear,  
They need to study aviation, that is clear!  
We all have built our castles in the air!  
So let us fly together there!

2—When some their knowledge would display, on the  
wing  
The air is trackless, so they say, on the wing,  
Yet we have found the course is plain,  
Our castle's portal to attain! (*Chorus.*)

CURTAIN



# Unusually Good Entertainments

Read One or More of These Before Deciding on  
Your Next Program

## **GRADUATION DAY AT WOOD HILL SCHOOL.**

An Entertainment in Two Acts, by WARD MACAULEY. For six males and four females, with several minor parts. Time of playing, two hours. Modern costumes. Simple interior scenes; may be presented in a hall without scenery. The unusual combination of a real "entertainment," including music, recitations, etc., with an interesting love story. The graduation exercises include short speeches, recitations, songs, funny interruptions, and a comical speech by a country school trustee.

## **EXAMINATION DAY AT WOOD HILL SCHOOL.**

An Entertainment in One Act, by WARD MACAULEY. Eight male and six female characters, with minor parts. Plays one hour. Scene, an easy interior, or may be given without scenery. Costumes, modern. Miss Marks, the teacher, refuses to marry a trustee, who threatens to discharge her. The examination includes recitations and songs, and brings out many funny answers to questions. At the close Robert Coleman, an old lover, claims the teacher. Very easy and very effective.

**BACK TO THE COUNTRY STORE.** A Rural Entertainment in Three Acts, by WARD MACAULEY. For four male and five female characters, with some supers. Time, two hours. Two scenes, both easy interiors. Can be played effectively without scenery. Costumes, modern. All the principal parts are sure hits. Quigley Higginbotham, known as "Quig," a clerk in a country store, aspires to be a great author or singer and decides to try his fortunes in New York. The last scene is in Quig's home. He returns a failure but is offered a partnership in the country store. He pops the question in the midst of a surprise party given in his honor. Easy to do and very funny.

**THE DISTRICT CONVENTION.** A Farcical Sketch in One Act, by FRANK DUMONT. For eleven males and one female, or twelve males. Any number of other parts or supernumeraries may be added. Plays forty-five minutes. No special scenery is required, and the costumes and properties are all easy. The play shows an uproarious political nominating convention. The climax comes when a woman's rights champion, captures the convention. There is a great chance to burlesque modern politics and to work in local gags. Every part will make a hit.

**SI SLOCUM'S COUNTRY STORE.** An Entertainment in One Act, by FRANK DUMONT. Eleven male and five female characters with supernumeraries. Several parts may be doubled. Plays one hour. Interior scene, or may be played without set scenery. Costumes, modern. The rehearsal for an entertainment in the village church gives plenty of opportunity for specialty work. A very jolly entertainment of the sort adapted to almost any place or occasion.

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# Unusually Good Entertainments

Read One or More of These Before Deciding on  
Your Next Program

**A SURPRISE PARTY AT BRINKLEY'S.** An Entertainment in One Scene, by WARD MACAULEY. Seven male and seven female characters. Interior scene, or may be given without scenery. Costumes, modern. Time, one hour. By the author of the popular successes, "Graduation Day at Wood Hill School," "Back to the Country Store," etc. The villagers have planned a birthday surprise party for Mary Brinkley, recently graduated from college. They all join in jolly games, songs, conundrums, etc., and Mary becomes engaged, which surprises the surprisers. The entertainment is a sure success.

**JONES VS. JINKS.** A Mock Trial in One Act, by EDWARD MUMFORD. Fifteen male and six female characters, with supernumeraries if desired. May be played all male. Many of the parts (members of the jury, etc.) are small. Scene, a simple interior; may be played without scenery. Costumes, modern. Time of playing, one hour. This mock trial has many novel features, unusual characters and quick action. Nearly every character has a funny entrance and laughable lines. There are many rich parts, and fast fun throughout.

**THE SIGHT-SEEING CAR.** A Comedy Sketch in One Act, by ERNEST M. GOULD. For seven males, two females, or may be all male. Parts may be doubled, with quick changes, so that four persons may play the sketch. Time, forty-five minutes. Simple street scene. Costumes, modern. The superintendent of a sight-seeing automobile engages two men to run the machine. A Jew, a farmer, a fat lady and other humorous characters give them all kinds of trouble. This is a regular galling-gun stream of rollicking repartee.

**THE CASE OF SMYTHE VS. SMITH.** An Original Mock Trial in One Act, by FRANK DUMONT. Eighteen males and two females, or may be all male. Plays about one hour. Scene, a county courtroom; requires no scenery; may be played in an ordinary hall. Costumes, modern. This entertainment is nearly perfect of its kind, and a sure success. It can be easily produced in any place or on any occasion, and provides almost any number of good parts.

**THE OLD MAIDS' ASSOCIATION.** A Farcical Entertainment in One Act, by LOUISE LATHAM WILSON. For thirteen females and one male. The male part may be played by a female, and the number of characters increased to twenty or more. Time, forty minutes. The play requires neither scenery nor properties, and very little in the way of costumes. Can easily be prepared in one or two rehearsals.

**BARGAIN DAY AT BLOOMSTEIN'S.** A Farcical Entertainment in One Act, by EDWARD MUMFORD. For five males and ten females, with supers. Interior scene. Costumes, modern. Time, thirty minutes. The characters and the situations which arise from their endeavors to buy and sell make rapid fun from start to finish.

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# Successful Plays for All Girls

In Selecting Your Next Play Do Not Overlook This List

**YOUNG DOCTOR DEVINE.** A Farce in Two Acts, by MRS. E. J. H. GOODFELLOW. One of the most popular plays for girls. For nine female characters. Time in playing, thirty minutes. Scenery, ordinary interior. Modern costumes. Girls in a boarding-school, learning that a young doctor is coming to vaccinate all the pupils, eagerly consult each other as to the manner of fascinating the physician. When the doctor appears upon the scene the pupils discover that the physician is a female practitioner.

**SISTER MASONS.** A Burlesque in One Act, by FRANK DUMONT. For eleven females. Time, thirty minutes. Costumes, fantastic gowns, or dominoes. Scene, interior. A grand expose of Masonry. Some women profess to learn the secrets of a Masonic lodge by hearing their husbands talk in their sleep, and they institute a similar organization.

**A COMMANDING POSITION.** A Farcical Entertainment, by AMELIA SANFORD. For seven female characters and ten or more other ladies and children. Time, one hour. Costumes, modern. Scenes, easy interiors and one street scene. Marian Young gets tired living with her aunt, Miss Skinflint. She decides to "attain a commanding position." Marian tries hospital nursing, college settlement work and school teaching, but decides to go back to housework.

**HOW A WOMAN KEEPS A SECRET.** A Comedy in One Act, by FRANK DUMONT. For ten female characters. Time, half an hour. Scene, an easy interior. Costumes, modern. Mabel Sweetly has just become engaged to Harold, but it's "the deepest kind of a secret." Before announcing it they must win the approval of Harold's uncle, now in Europe, or lose a possible ten thousand a year. At a tea Mabel meets her dearest friend. Maude sees Mabel has a secret, she coaxes and Mabel tells her. But Maude lets out the secret in a few minutes to another friend and so the secret travels.

**THE OXFORD AFFAIR.** A Comedy in Three Acts, by JOSEPHINE H. COBB and JENNIE E. PAINE. For eight female characters. Plays one hour and three-quarters. Scenes, interiors at a seaside hotel. Costumes, modern. The action of the play is located at a summer resort. Alice Graham, in order to chaperon herself, poses as a widow, and Miss Oxford first claims her as a sister-in-law, then denounces her. The onerous duties of Miss Oxford, who attempts to serve as chaperon to Miss Howe and Miss Ashton in the face of many obstacles, furnish an evening of rare enjoyment.

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